8/2/72

Dear Jerry,

This is a receipt for four large envelopes and one small one in today's mail. The large ones contain what seems to be the files on which Linda was to have worked and made cards. From the absence of cards I presume this was an entire futility, unless some of the material disappeared, in which case it would be worse. If you are not too busy and too important to read the newspapers, I presume that from the label on one of the files you may have detected its current relevance and might be willing to conceive that not having it limited the amount of backgrounding I can do on that particular still page 1 story. If you can escape the fictions so expedient for you to have invented, you might also understand that some of this backgrounding has been put to good use.

With the smaller envelope, which contained a few miscellaneous items from my files all conveniently not labelled with the files from which they came was your handwritten not dated 7/31, written on a scrap of yellow paper. I think it serves your interest to have a copy. It reads, "I just received your most recent letter. You imply that I had no right to judge whether or not you have immediate need of nay manuscripts [sic] of yours that I may have. All manuscripts that I have are copies that I made from originals that I returned to you. Hence my copies were never in your possession, and hence I will return them only because you don't wish me to have ~~xxxx~~ copies — not because they are your property. The copyright is clearly yours, but copies that I made are technically mine, and I will send them to you when I get around to it which will most likely be after my return from Europe."

As long as you return all of them, fine. I presume from your previous assurances that you have not given copies of these to anyone. I was, when I let you have these, content for you to have them and happy that you would make copies for me, for I then was without doubt about trusting you. There were people I was willing to have copies. This situation you have unilaterally changed and the basis for your having copies you have eliminated. I won't strain gnats as you do, but the copyright does have a meaning and I intend to exercise the rights it gives me. I don't want <u>any</u> unauthorized use of <u>any</u> of my material by anyone. I do, regularly, authorize such use. If you are unaware of it, then you should learn this is the purpose of a copyright. I am quite serious about this. If everything is the way you say, I am as satisfied as I can be under the circumstances. But there should be no fingers-crossed business, none of your own interpretations of copyright law or any other such invitation to trouble. If you say you have not given copies to anyone, I accept your assurance. If you say you will return all copies, I will take your word for it.

I can say only that I am sorry that you brought all of this to pass for no good reason, serving not purpose at all, and I merely note for the record that you have been silent on this score when I informed you, as has Gary. For your sake and for the sake of your peace of mind in the future, I do hope that the contingencies now fairly obvious possibilities do not come to pass, for if they do, even the shell you have constructed around you conscience may not be enough. If I do not elaborate, it is not by accident.

Having no reason not to take your word when you give it, I assume that you have not given copies of these books to anyone, for you said, as I recall, that you had given nothing to anyone. If you made an unreported exception of these books, I would like to know to whom and I will then decide whether or not I am satisfied for them to have copies. If I hear nothing from you, I will asume that you have made no distribution of what you seem to designate as "techni ally" your property, a fiction. There will then be no need for further correspondence I would like to avoid.

That you have been unresponsive to a rather large number of things is your affair. That you have been unresponsive is obvious. I do hope you are capable of thinking clearly about them and, if much too late, coming to understand what they mean or can mean. If you want to kid yourself into thinking it is because of your generous nature and desire not to engage in disputes, I will carry it no further. I desire to break this as completely and cleanly as is possible - and as soon as possible.

Sincerely,